

## **Introduction**

The purpose of the report is to identify and outline my goals and plans for the development of my intended professional area of expertise and maintenance of my digital web presence. In addition to these areas of focus, search engine optimization (SEO) strategies to help achieve these current and future goals will be discussed. As my personal portfolio of work and digital identity/web presence grow, my current plans for maintenance and development may need to be adjusted accordingly.

## **Section 1 - Thought Leadership Goals**

Currently my planned professional area of expertise is in digital engagement, with hopes of working with arts and/or educational organizations. My educational background and my professional experiences have demonstrated to me the need for connecting to youth through education. As educational technologies continue to develop new ways to communicate and connect, the educators of our younger generations must look at how we can embrace the digital world to increase accessibility and options for a student-centered environment.

I am committed to dedicating my professional work to creating new educational opportunities through development of digital educational resources. Due to the increasingly rapid pace that technology is changing, this goal will require me to continually be learning about new technologies and be reflective of my own professional development and growth. Participating in social groups that share the same interests will allow me to both be exposed to relevant innovations by other educators and grow my network of connections. Continuing to read about development in technologies and subscribing to publications related to educational technologies will also allow me the opportunity for me to stay updated on the progress of innovation and any relevant research. Blogging on my portfolio website will give me a format to be reflective about the development of new technologies, and

sharing those blog posts on social media sites will allow me to gain feedback from peers as well.

One area I am increasingly passionate about is exploring the role of games in education. As an avid “gamer”, I see the potential that games have for creating educational opportunities and developing civic participation. I believe in the power of a well-designed game to change real life behaviors and the potential for collective problem solving through data collection. Although this area is not currently related to my professional area of expertise, the gamification of educational experiences is a concept that I am very excited about. Reading articles and books by others who are working in game design has been inspirational and insightful, and I hope to find more opportunities to learn about current educational game development through social groups, blogs, and playing more games!

## **Section 2 - Role of Base Camp Site and Personal Learning Network (PLN)**

The two main roles of my base camp site and personal learning network will be to exhibit my own work and to act as a platform for the organization of my reflections on the development of technology and educational innovations.

Showcasing my portfolio will be essential to demonstrating competency in digital engagement and development of educational resources. Sending multiple links is not conducive to the experience of the receiver, and the experience of viewing my past works is equally as important as the quality of the work itself. Therefore, giving attention to how I am presenting my portfolio is an essential component to increasing my professional opportunities.

A space for organized reflection will be crucial for my professional development, as the world is busy, full of options and far too often, distractions. Keeping a record of the people, organizations, and information that I create and find connections with will help to clarify my own intentions and stay focused. Blogging on my base camp site will

function both as a method of processing information internally and a way to communicate with others about my insights and thoughts. Collective problem solving is surely stronger with each voice that joins in, and my blog posts will be my input.

### **Section 3 - Strategic Plan for Establishing Web Presence**

Now that I have my base camp site set up with an area to organize my work and my reflections, maintaining this space on a regular basis will ensure that I am continuing to develop my web presence and giving myself a good reminder to be reflective. The following strategies outline my plans for how I will achieve these goals.

#### *#2 Regularly update your professional website*

My plan for updating my website initially is to continue to use my blog page to reflect on topics, issues, and products that are relevant to my current projects and areas of interest. Bookmarking articles and sites as I find them allows me to go back and create a blog post that addresses those I want to process further. I plan on setting aside a couple hours every other week to go through the bookmarks and create a blog post, and re-posting blogs I create on our organizational website to my personal website for increased exposure. I will also update my portfolio page during Winter break with the projects, presentations, and research I have recently completed, and complete the same process following the Spring and Fall semesters. In addition to academic projects completed, I plan on adding professionally developed resources as well.

#### *#3 Track your traffic*

Aside from my personal use of my site as a way to organize my work and thoughts, I also hope that my site can be a resource for those who are interested in similar topics. Tracking traffic on my site will allow me to identify the methods and processes that are most effective so I can spend my time wisely and connect with others more easily. Fortunately, Wix has an SEO Wizard built into the website building program that helps to ensure you are maximizing the SEO performance for your website. After running

the initial report, I found several quick changes that I could make right away to adjust how and when my page shows up in search engines. Wix also has an option to update my subscription to include built in traffic analytics. I will likely be signing up for this service as it also discontinues the advertisements displayed and includes a domain name for one year.

#### *#5 Publish Work via Social Media & #6 Leverage Social Networks*

Once I have built up a foundation of blog posts and a developed portfolio space, I plan on using social media to draw those in my network to my website to view my work and give feedback on my reflections. Sharing a blog post teaser on professional sites such as LinkedIn and other social learning groups I participate in will be the main method of expanding my web presence. Growing my network of connections through sharing my ideas will hopefully allow me to connect with more individuals who are interested in similar subjects. I also plan on sharing resources that I have created with open networked learning sites where educators can go to find free lesson plans. After a foundation of connections and reflections has been established, a weekly social media post will become part of routine maintenance and contribute to my professional development. I will also share my work with my family and close friends through Facebook to encourage feedback from those in my personal life.

#### *#7 Be a good user of other's content*

Reviewing and reflecting on other's work that interests me is also important in developing my web presence. Not only does it allow me to expand my own experiences with educational resources and new technologies, I can possibly contribute to another's work and help them to solve challenges I might be more familiar with. Sharing resources allows for greater collaborative problem solving. In addition, forging connections will foster relationships with others who are working in fields of interest and could lead to collaborative projects and professional opportunities in the future.

### *#8 Complete all profiles*

I may not participate in every social media site available to me, but if I can complete each profile I do have and continue updating them my intended digital identity will be more consistent. The use of the same titles, key words, and message across all sites will be consistent to ensure there is no confusion about my experiences and goals.

### **Section 4 - Preliminary Assessment of Plan's Effectiveness**

Developing a routine for the management of my portfolio site and web presence will be the key to my continued growth. Reflecting on what I've managed so far, the results are directly tied into the effort I put into the work. Cross-pollinating my personal social media sites with the spaces that I professionally manage has already increased the effectiveness and reach of the projects I am working on. For example, I've started to use my personal Facebook and LinkedIn profile to share blog posts from my portfolio site blog as well as the non-profit organization I am working with. As a result, I have seen increased engagement and reach on both sites. After I have updated my portfolio with more examples of projects completed in this semester's class, I plan on using similar methods to increase traffic to my site through my blog. In the future, I will continue to assess the effectiveness of this strategy through the tracking of traffic and engagement.

### **Section 5 - Next Steps**

My future goals and plans for using social media and networking to establish my web presence rely heavily on staying updated on new technologies and digital spaces to engage in. My generation in particular is in a unique position, and in many ways we can act as translators as we experienced the transition to widespread use of the internet during a critical time in our intellectual development. We understand and can relate to not only the analog generation that came before us, but also the generations

to come that will be heavily reliant on the internet and the digital world for their own growth and development. After experiencing the many changes we have already seen in the digital world, from dial-up internet connection and AOL chat rooms to cloud-based technologies and google hangouts, I believe that in order to continue to be effective and relevant in the world we must be receptive to new technologies and reflective of our own use of them.

In order to sustain my professional development and growth, I plan on continuing to subscribe to relevant publications, following the blogs of industry leaders, and committing to lifelong learning habits. After my graduate program is complete, I hope to find online open courses to participate in so I can continue to share my work with peers and collaborate with others who have the same interests. I will continue to participate in social and professional networking sites to broaden my network of connections.

The next step for the development of my content is to take the time to update my site with relevant coursework and projects that I feel add to my portfolio of work. Keeping my portfolio space and blog updated and fresh will ensure that my content does not become stale or irrelevant to my professional goals. Regular blog posts will ensure I am taking the time to be reflective about my work and my digital spaces.

In anticipation of the growth of my portfolio space and my digital identity, I also plan on using more advanced tools in the future for monitoring the traffic and engagement of my content. Once my content and web presence are more developed, I may use Google Analytics to monitor the technical aspects of my digital spaces. In addition, I plan on continuing to get informal feedback from peers, family and friends to ensure I am not too heavily reliant on data to make decisions about my actions. Ultimately, new tools that I may not be familiar with (or perhaps ones that have not yet been produced!) may provide more opportunities for understanding how the world is engaging with my content.